



# Center for School and Community Services

col·lab·o·ra·tion  
for stu·dent  
suc·cess



## AED Center for School and Community Services

The AED Center for School and Community Services has applied decades of research to pioneering successful approaches to school reform. It has also evaluated—and helped to advance—some of the most exciting initiatives in American education.

In the tradition of AED, the Center defines “education” broadly. Recognizing the interdependence of many players in effective education, we mobilize partnerships to create and sustain deep change in school systems and youth programs. We are committed to fostering life-long learning and development in schools, youth centers, clinics, workplaces, and communities. This work encompasses more than 125 programs in 40 states.

### Core Services

- Designing and managing comprehensive educational reform and community improvement initiatives
- Evaluating school and community improvement programs



Collaboration for Student Success. Collaboration for Student Success. Collaboration for Student Success.

- Conducting research on critical issues in education, health, youth services, and community development
- Providing technical assistance to schools and community-based programs
- Fostering the capacity of schools and community programs to undertake ongoing self-assessment geared to program improvement and increased student learning

### School Reform to Improve Teaching and Learning

[www.middlestart.org](http://www.middlestart.org) and [scs.aed.org/sssa.html](http://scs.aed.org/sssa.html)

AED developed **Middle Start** in Michigan in 1994, funded originally by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. Today it ranks as one of the country's 25 most frequently used school reform models. AED serves as the Middle Start National Center, through which it coordinates regional partnerships of universities, advocacy groups, and research and evaluation organizations that provide coaching and professional development services to participating schools.

An integral part of Middle Start and other reform strategies is **School Self-Assessment**, which AED developed with national experts.

In a supportive atmosphere, AED guides all faculty, staff, and interested family and community members to rethink a school's goals and how to achieve and assess them.

*“School Self-Assessment gave me a clear map of where to go. We are no longer preoccupied with fighting fires and are focused instead on our core mission: the improvement of teaching and learning.”*

– Principal of the Butzel School, Detroit

Butzel made literacy its top goal when it began School Self-Assessment in 1998. Since then, teachers have incorporated reading and writing into every subject. In a sea change, students now outperform district and state averages in reading.



The Carnegie Corporation selected AED to provide technical assistance for **Schools for a New Society**, which supports systemwide reform of high schools in seven cities: Boston; Worcester, Mass.; Providence, R.I.; Chattanooga/Hamilton County, Tenn.; Houston; San Diego; and Sacramento. Reforms focus especially on creating small,

engaging environments in which all

students can perform at high levels. To foster cross-site learning, AED facilitates a learning network among the seven sites. The project receives additional support from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. [www.carnegie.org/sns](http://www.carnegie.org/sns)

AED manages the **National Service-Learning Partnership**, a leadership organization dedicated to making service-learning a core element of the educational experience of every elementary, middle, and secondary school student in the country. Service-learning fosters civic engagement, offers young people the skills essential for 21st century life, and helps them master core academic subjects. The Partnership comprises more than 5,500 members from throughout the United States. Together with Partnership leaders, AED educates, organizes, and mobilizes members through a variety of activities, including an electronic newsletter, action alerts on relevant policy issues, and publications to support service-learning advocates. [www.service-learningpartnership.org](http://www.service-learningpartnership.org)

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### Evaluations to Inspire Improvement

AED has evaluated many important school reform and youth and community development initiatives over the last decade. In the process, it has fostered understanding of program quality—and has helped schools and youth programs improve significantly.

Whether conducting a formal, expert evaluation or inspiring schools to perform self-assessments, AED evaluations have two signature qualities: utility and stakeholder participation. AED works with program staff to determine what they most need to explore and designs the most useful benchmarks and methods to gauge success.

Many AED evaluations entail multiple sites and numerous indicators. AED has developed innovative methods for collecting and using large amounts of data from surveys, interviews, focus groups, ethnographic fieldwork, and reviews of program documents.

While evaluating the **National Writing Project**, AED helped create tools to assess teaching and learning using measures beyond standardized tests. This innovative methodology appraises teachers' assignments and children's essays according to rigorous standards over time. The methods have become a prototype for measuring achievement to supplement standardized testing.

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In rural Mississippi and Louisiana, **Project Hyperleap** fostered the use of technology by teachers, students, and other community members and strove to address the “digital divide” in poor and rural communities. The AED evaluation revealed the support teachers and students need to take full advantage of the Internet and other advanced technology.

AED evaluated the New York City **Beacons Initiative**, the largest municipally funded youth initiative in the United States. Community centers based at 80 schools, the Beacons provide a range of activities to engender youth and community development. The study demonstrated that the Beacons provided safe places and engaging activities to foster new skills and friendships among youth, staff, and community members.







School-community links were also the focus of **Constituency-Building for School Reform**, funded by the Ford Foundation. The study examined some of the country's most promising efforts to develop, organize, and support strong, engaged constituencies for public school reform. The final report highlights the lessons of these successful efforts in developing strong community-based advocates for reform of public schools.

Throughout its evaluations and research, AED strives to make the process, the product, and the presentations valuable learning experiences for all—and client feedback shows that we succeed.

### School- and Community-Based Health Programs

AED works with schools and school districts on a variety of student health issues. We recently published *Building Emergency Contraception Awareness Among Adolescents: A Toolkit for Schools and Community-Based Organizations* to provide staff in schools, clinics, and community-based organizations with strategies for offering accurate and timely information to the teens who depend on them.

### Educational Equity Center at AED

[www.edequity.org](http://www.edequity.org)

Educational Equity Concepts, Inc.—a nonprofit organization with extensive experience integrating equity issues into the field of early childhood and elementary education—joined the AED Center for School and Community Services recently to create the Educational Equity Center at AED.

The mission of the Educational Equity Center is to create high-profile programs and policies that foster equality of opportunity for students regardless of gender, race/ethnicity, disability, or level of family income. The Center offers training and curricula for educators, parents, and communities to promote bias-free learning on a national scale.

The Educational Equity Center also designs and implements research, technical assistance, and dissemination projects to further public understanding of the need for equal opportunity for all children starting in early childhood.

### Representative Clients and Funders

- Annie E. Casey Foundation
- Carnegie Corporation of New York
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Edna McConnell Clark Foundation
- Foundation for the Mid South
- Ford Foundation
- Gap Foundation
- W.K. Kellogg Foundation
- John Merck Fund
- Michigan Department of Education and Michigan School Districts
- Charles Stewart Mott Foundation
- New York City Department of Education
- New York City Department of Youth and Community Development
- David and Lucile Packard Foundation
- State Farm Life Insurance Companies
- Wallace Foundation

### Working with SCS

Interested organizations can contact us via phone or email; please see the back cover for complete information. Federal agencies can request our services using the GSA/MOBIS schedule. Please reference GSA Federal Supply Service, schedule 00-CORP, Contract GS-00F-0007M. The Department of Education should use the MATO Contract ED-04-CO-0021.



The AED Center for School and Community Services is part of the AED U.S. Education and Workforce Development Group, which focuses on improving the quality of decision making for educational reform and workforce development in the United States.

The Academy for Educational Development (AED), founded in 1961, connects people throughout the world to opportunities and resources that can improve their lives. AED works on a nonprofit basis under grants and contracts in partnership with national, state, and local government agencies; foundations and corporations; and community-based organizations.



**FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:**

Patrick J. Montesano, Vice President and Co-Director  
Tel. 212-367-4573 • [pmontesa@aed.org](mailto:pmontesa@aed.org)  
Alexandra T. Weinbaum, Vice President and Co-Director  
Tel. 212-367-4577 • [sweinbau@aed.org](mailto:sweinbau@aed.org)

AED Center for School and Community Services  
Academy for Educational Development  
100 Fifth Avenue • New York, NY 10011  
[scs.aed.org](http://scs.aed.org) • [www.aed.org](http://www.aed.org)



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